

Stratford Historical Society >> UPDATE

A Hand on the PAST >> An Eye to the FUTURE

Volume XII Issue 2

November 2007



Capt. David Judson House c 1750
Catharine B. Mitchell Museum

NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Friday November 30, 2007 - 7:00pm

Christ Episcopal Church
2000 Main Street, Stratford

Rebecca Arkenberg *Silas Burton Project*

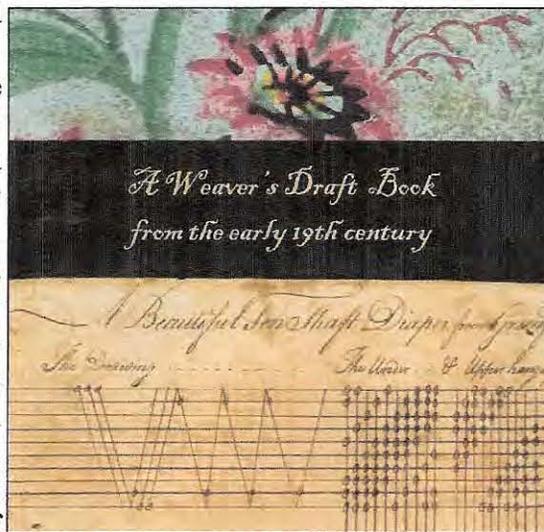


Rebecca Arkenberg has been interested in textiles ever since her grandmother taught her to embroider when she was 4. In college she learned weaving and resist-dyeing techniques, and she was involved in Surface Design Association in its early years. Rebecca presently works at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, where her teacher workshops and tours often focus on the museum textiles and the Ratti Textile Center.

Rebecca became interested in the Stratford Historical Society. Over the last several months she has entered the daybook, and reed and weaved so that she can identify which weaving drafts, or patterns, page will be included in a through the historical society.

Burton was one of five professional weavers in Stratford in 1824, and he primarily wove coverlets, carpets, and table linens. He sold or bartered his work to his neighbors, fellow townspeople, and customers from surrounding areas, New York City, and even North Carolina. A number of early Stratford residents came to Burton for loom parts, mending, or weaving assistance. Others wove for him in barter for other goods and services. In addition to weaving, Silas Burton supplemented his income by teaching school, farming, working for the town of Stratford, and smoking meats.

In her presentation, Rebecca will introduce the audience to Silas Burton in the context of his life in Stratford. Descendants of 19th-century Stratford families and representatives from area historic houses are invited to attend and search the databases for familiar names!



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The meeting is open to the Public
Refreshments will be served — Bring a Friend
Note starting time now 7:00pm

Rudy Mastroianni **President**

Much good to report as the end of another year bears down on the Society. The Judson House and the Carriage House have been winterized until next Spring. But, much more activity will continue to take place within the confines of the Office: In brief, requests for genealogical research and/or for general information will be honored; the Governing Board will meet bi-monthly to dispense with all topics of business, map out plans for 2008 History Camp, Tag Sale, Newsletters, programs for Membership meetings; recruiting new docents and hostesses/hosts and conducting training classes, and scheduling school tours.

On behalf of the Governing Board, I thank all our members, new ones and those that remain faithful year after year. Your ongoing support through membership dues and contributions during the 2007 fiscal year, bolstered by the return from our unrestricted and restricted funds, made possible major capital improvements to the Judson House, with a new roof and external paint jobs for both the House and Catharine Mitchell museum. In addition, Society activities of school and public tours were sustained and flourished during the open season. But, as we know, the Society does not function on funds alone! It takes human power in the form of volunteers, and there are many to whom we owe thanks.

Space does not permit acknowledging each by name. I especially thank the members of the Governing Board and the Standing Committees, who are generous with their time and talent, and who provide outstanding financial oversight, as well as a newsletter and programs five times a year. I ask for your continuous cooperation and support, as we work together to make the Society one of the finest in the State.

We look forward to being with you at the next, and final 2007 membership meeting on November 30. We saved the best for last! Society member, talented and well known weaver Rebecca Arkenberg will be the featured guest speaker sharing her expertise.

The Governing Board joins me in extending very best wishes for an enjoyable upcoming holiday season.

Carol Lovell **Curator & Accessions Chairperson**

Recently the Society obtained through auctions many documents from old Stratford such as the Brooks family papers, including Selene Brooks store invoices, and an old "Sugared Popcorn" bag from Batterson & Lampson, Stratford Conn. We have to do research on this store. It is a new name to us.

Photos have been requested for the new Big Y supermarket on Hawley Lane. Seven photos will be used with captions we have approved, and the Society will receive \$100 for each image from Creative Dimensions in Plainville, the producer of the images for Big Y.

New Alliance Bank, soon to be located in the Big Y shopping center also wants to use some photos of Old Stratford. Details have yet to be worked out.

Request was received from a Canadian public broadcasting company for use of our "Flora" image and the map currently in our slavery exhibit. Our price of \$1,500 for "Flora" and \$100 for the map was not satisfactory to them.

Thank you notes were received from clothing researchers from Ohio who were allowed to come to the Museum and review our early 19th century clothing in preparation for creating historically accurate clothing patterns for sale to historic interpreters.

Fifty people came into the Society office this year (2006-2007) for genealogical research and/or for general information.

Book of Remembrance

Given By: The national Curtis/s Family Society

In Memory of Barbara Weaver who died June 22, 2007. Barbara was of the John and Elizabeth (Hutchins) Curtiss line in Stratford, a member of the Curtis/s Family Society for 38 years, and President from 1991 until 2002. It was during her tenure that the Curtis/s Family Society donated the "Miss Curtis/s" c 1850 quilt, to the Stratford Historical Society. It joined the pewter teapot created by Lemuel J. Curtiss of Meriden, which had been donated in 1976.

Given By: Andrew J. Nelson

In memory of my dear friend David P. Guion
In honor of his Aunt Arline Nelson on her 82nd birthday.

The Corsair Restoration Project Todd Lovell, 1st Vice President And Dick Steele, Editor



The Connecticut Air and Space Museum recently held a public Open House to create public awareness of the need to restore the badly weathered **F4U Corsair**, presently on a pedestal at the air-

port entrance.

The plan is to renovate and protect the airplane from the elements to safeguard it for the future. Stratford's former State Senator George "Doc" Gunther worked successfully to have the Corsair designated as the State Aircraft. Based upon agreements between the Town of Stratford, the City of Bridgeport and the Connecticut Air and Space Museum (whose volunteers will work on the repair), the push is now on to raise the repair costs through donations, and get the project underway.

The campaign is just beginning and many are in support, including the Stratford Historical Society with a beginning pledge of \$2,500.

The feeling of the Society Board is that when the Corsair is restored and preserved, it should be returned to the location at the airport entrance where it has been since 1971. It will continue to be a tribute to the engineers who designed it, the thousands of area people who built it, the brave men who flew it and also, the thousands of servicemen who returned safely home because of the capabilities of this magnificent aircraft! The Corsair was the last propeller-driven fighter aircraft and served not only in World War II, but also in Korea and Vietnam.

Future families will look upon this preserved monument and honor their ancestors who built it. It will help to re-instill the spirit of national pride and patriotism so prevalent in the nation fifty five years ago.

The Stratford Historical Society's Statement of Purpose includes the words: "To Preserve and Educate". This project is an absolute must for the citizens of Stratford and neighboring towns. Donations are desperately needed. This will be a very costly project. This plane must be preserved! It is an irreplaceable piece of the history of Stratford and the nation. Please be generous in your giving.

Those wishing to contribute to the Corsair Restoration effort may send checks to the Corsair Restoration Fund, Connecticut Air and Space Center, Sniffins Lane, Stratford, Ct. 06615.

September Membership Meeting



Mary Witkowski, Bridgeport City Historian and head of the historical collection at the Bridgeport Public Library, presented a collection of early photographs of Bridgeport scenes, dating from the mid 1800's.

Docent & Hostess/Host Reception

A reception to thank docents and hostesses/hosts was held on September 21st in the museum. Also attending this year were members of the Junior Society who, with their parents, had assisted in hosting during July and August. Two of the Juniors spoke to the group of their interests in the Society and in local history.



Tag Sale

Starting in 1961 and for over thirty-five years, the Stratford Historical Society sponsored very successful Antique Shows. With the popularity of "The Antique Road Show," the value of what was once considered disposable became valuable and donations became scarce. Attics and basements were cleared with an eye for, maybe, Aunt Clara's old treasures that were worth something on E-Bay.

In 1999 the Society decided to continue with a "Tag Sale" of items from attics and basements that were not antique but salable. For three years our members and friends brought in numerous articles and the sales were very successful. We think our good friends have now had ample time to accumulate items and would again like to clear their homes of excess clutter.

We will start accepting everything to be sold (in reasonable condition) as soon as you receive this Newsletter. Items such as jewelry (very popular), books, baskets, china, cutlery, dolls, toys, furniture, glassware, pictures, etc., will be welcome. The sale will be held at the Catharine B. Mitchell Museum in the spring under the CO-Chairmanship of Marie Blake and Shirley McCormack. You may bring your items to the Society during office hours, Tuesday or Thursday from 9am to 2:30 pm, or call 378-0630 if you need pickup service.

We will be in need of volunteers on the day of the sale.

Looms in Back Room on Second Floor of the Judson House



Stratford Historical Society
(203) 378-0630
967 Academy Hill
P.O.Box 382
Stratford, CT 06615-0382



Reminder
If the year 2007 is above your name on the
address label, your dues for the year 2007-
2008 have not been paid.

COMPUTER CORNER

e-mail us at: Judsonhousestfd@aol.com

Fax: 378-2562

On the Web: www.stratfordhistoricalsociety.com

Stratford Historical Society Governing Board
Meeting

December 17, 2007

Catharine B. Mitchell Museum All members of
the Society are Welcome to Attend
Please call 378-0630 for information